

Team,

As I informed you in my May 31, 2013 staff message, TJJD is required by a rider to our FY 2014-15 appropriations to reduce the number of secure facilities we operate from six to five by January 1, 2014. After an extensive review and evaluation of all our facilities as well as our current and future youth populations, I will be presenting a staff recommendation to our Board to close the Corsicana Residential Treatment Center.

This is an extremely difficult recommendation on many levels. Each of our existing secure facilities has played a valuable role in the history of the agency and provides a unique service, which is a primary reason each has survived previous closure rounds. However, as the agency model evolves to better address the needs of youth committed to TJJD, I believe closing the Corsicana facility is the logical recommendation and is in the long-term interest of our agency and youth.

I was at the Corsicana campus today and informed the staff first-hand of this decision. They were quite naturally disappointed at this news – as any of us would be if we were to learn of such a major disruption to our lives and families. I assured them that that this recommendation is not a reflection of the work they have performed. In fact, the Corsicana staff have worked valiantly for many years with a very difficult youth population and provided excellent service. More than anything else, this is about the limitations of that particular facility and the cost it would require to bring it up to acceptable standards.

We will do everything we can to allow our Corsicana employees to continue their TJJD employment at another location if they choose to do so. All non-essential vacant positions in the agency have been frozen to provide Corsicana employees the opportunity to move into vacancies for which they are qualified at other facilities. The Texas Workforce Commission will also provide assistance by holding job fairs on site to place as many people as possible who wish to remain in the Corsicana area. We will be providing more information on these opportunities to our Corsicana workforce in the very near future.

This closure recommendation will be submitted to the TJJD Board for consideration at their July 26, 2013 meeting. Prior to that time, the agency will conduct a public hearing on July 15, 2013 at 10 a.m. in Austin at the Crowne Plaza Hotel to allow representatives of the Corsicana community an opportunity to provide any additional information they would like our Board to consider alongside the staff closure recommendation. Following this invited testimony, the hearing will be opened for public comment. Information gained from this public hearing will be presented to the Board for their consideration as they make the final closure decision.

If the staff recommendation is accepted and the Corsicana campus is closed, there will be additional adjustments at all our facilities. Obviously, we will need to transition to a new model to deal with our youth with severe mental health issues. I would also like to level the population at our largest facilities to match our staffing patterns. We are currently working on a utilization plan to maximize the strength of our facilities while providing our youth with every opportunity to be successful in their rehabilitation and community re-entry. We will continue implementing the best options for effective rehabilitative and treatment services.

I will keep you informed as this process develops and make sure you know of our Board's decision on July 26.

Mike